

Rep. Bruce Braley (D-Iowa) today introduced the 2008 Amtrak Reauthorization Bill with House Transportation Committee Chairman Jim Oberstar (D-Minn.) and other members of the Transportation Committee. Braley is an original cosponsor of the bill, which includes language to create a new, \$500 million ...

Braley Introduces Bill Boosting Prospects of Rail Connections Between Dubuque, Quad Cities and Chicago

Braley Cosponsor of Amtrack Reauthorization Act with Transportation Committee Leaders

Washington, May 8 - Rep. Bruce Braley (D-Iowa) today introduced the 2008 Amtrak Reauthorization Bill with House Transportation Committee Chairman Jim Oberstar (D-Minn.) and other members of the Transportation Committee.

Braley is an original cosponsor of the bill, which includes language to create a new, \$500 million per year "State Capital Grant Program." The program would award federal grants to states to pay for the construction of new passenger rail service between US cities. Projects that could apply for funding under this program include proposed passenger rail service between Chicago and the Quad Cities, the Quad Cities and Des Moines via Iowa City, and Chicago and Dubuque.

The bill also includes a Braley-sponsored provision mandating a Federal Railroad Administration study into the viability of the widespread use of biolubricants in freight and passenger rail as an alternative to petroleum-based lubricants. The University of Northern Iowa's National Ag-Based Lubricant Center (NABL) is located in Iowa's First District.

"With gas prices approaching four dollars per gallon, we need to invest in transportation alternatives that give people alternatives to driving," Braley said. "Passenger rail has the potential to be a viable alternative in many places, including the Chicago region. The Amtrak bill will help make frequent, efficient passenger rail service between Dubuque and the Quad Cities to Chicago a reality. The bill will also help advance emerging biotechnology like biolubricants."